United Nations E/CN.6/2013/6

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 December 2012

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-seventh session
4-15 March 2013
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters

Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2012/25, highlights the situation of Palestinian women between 1 October 2011 and 30 September 2012 and provides an overview of the assistance provided by entities of the United Nations system with regard to education and training; health; economic empowerment and livelihoods; rule of law and violence against women; power and decision-making; and institutional development. The report concludes with recommendations for consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women.

* E/CN.6/2013/1.

12-65575 (E) 150113

Please recycle

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2012/25 on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, the Economic and Social Council expressed deep concern about the grave situation of Palestinian women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The Council requested the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation, to assist Palestinian women by all available means, including those laid out by the Secretary-General in his previous report on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2012/6) and to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-seventh session a report, including information provided by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report covers the period from 1 October 2011 to 30 September 2012 and reviews the situation of Palestinian women based on information from United Nations entities and individual experts that monitor the situation of Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

3. Unless indicated otherwise, the report is based on contributions and information submitted by entities of the United Nations system that provide assistance to Palestinian women, including ESCWA, the United Nations country team for the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process. The United Nations country team has coordinated the contributions to the report of the following United Nations entities: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

II. Situation of Palestinian women

4. During the reporting period, the political, social and economic conditions on the ground remained challenging. While these conditions have an impact on all Palestinians, women and girls experience them differently because of gender-based inequalities and discrimination. Despite efforts by the United Nations, the Quartet and individual Member States to provide facilitation and some initial diplomatic progress in early 2012, peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians remained at an impasse, with confidence in the political process eroding. The continuation of the political and geographical divide between the Gaza Strip and the

West Bank and limited progress in reconciliation, ongoing Israeli occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and closure of the Gaza Strip, continued to give rise to a difficult social and economic situation for Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. At the same time, the Palestinians' State-building programme progressed further, increasing both the depth and the breadth of institutional readiness for Statehood. The sustainability of these achievements, however, whether in the economic or the security fields, is at increased risk. The growing tension and escalation in violence are of grave concern. The United Nations and Quartet partners have, as outlined in recent reports by the Secretary-General, continuously urged both sides to avoid provocations which would be detrimental to the prospects of peace (see A/67/84-E/2012/68 and A/67/364-S/2012/701).

5. Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continue to face serious obstacles to freedom of movement and access. Inadequate zoning and planning on the part of Israeli authorities, residency policies and practices,[1] expropriations of buildings and allocation of land, the barrier, checkpoints, the permit and access regime, and bureaucratic constraints constitute a multifaceted system which impeded movement into the Gaza Strip, between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, within the West Bank, and into East Jerusalem from the remainder of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The barrier and the restrictions have a gender-specific impact and continue to pres .t particular risks for expectant mothers, such as lack of access to specialized maternal care for high-risk births. The restrictions have a significant impact on overall economic development and on the capacity of local and international organizations to provide humanitarian and other assistance.[2]

6. Continued settlement activity has resulted in the forced eviction and displacement of Palestinians, causing direct physical insecurity, disruption of livelihoods and basic services, a decreased standard of living and increasing dependence on humanitarian aid. As outlined in recent reports by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the impact on women's and families' psychosocial well-being can be devastating.[3]

7. Tensions, violent incidents and attacks linked to the conflict and the occupation continued throughout the reporting period, resulting in civilian deaths and injury. There was a reported increase in settler-related violence in the West Bank. Israel faced increased indiscriminate firing of rockets, mortars and other munitions from Gaza, which spiked during several dangerous rounds of escalation. Gazans suffered from militant activity as well as operations of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), which conducted an increased number of air strikes (see A/67/84-E/2012/68 and E/67/364-S/2012/701). According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs,[4] in the West Bank 5 Palestinian civilians (4 men and 1 boy) were killed and 2,372 injured (including 1,986 men, 75 women, 288 boys and

[1] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory, "The humanitarian impact of the Barrier", fact sheet (July 2012).

[2] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory, "Fragmented lives: humanitarian overview 2011" (May 2012).

[3] See, for example, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory, "Demolitions and forced displacement in the Occupied West Bank" (January 2012); and "Settlements in Palestinian residential areas in East Jerusalem" (April 2012).

[4] Figures cover the period from 1 October 2011 to 30 September 2012; data collected by the United Nations.

16 girls) by IDF, while 112 men, 21 women and 40 children were injured by settlers. Forty Israeli settlers (36 men, 1 woman, 2 boys and 1 girl) were injured by Palestinians. In the Gaza Strip, 11 Palestinian civilians (7 men, 1 woman and 3 boys) were killed and 153 injured (including 84 men, 25 women, 33 boys and 3 girls) during Israeli air strikes. Twelve Israeli civilians (11 men and 1 woman) were injured by Palestinian rockets launched into southern Israel. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, available information indicates that violent acts by members of IDF or by settlers are rarely subject to independent or impartial investigations and that violations are often perpetrated with impunity.

8. Women in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remained vulnerable to arbitrary restrictions on their right to freedom of expression and assembly. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights reports that women continued to be exposed to violence and danger during peaceful demonstrations, where, on separate occasions, both Israeli and Palestinian Authority security forces (in the West Bank), as well as the de facto authorities (in the Gaza Strip), used excessive force in policing the demonstrations.

9. As of 31 August 2012, 6 women were held in Israeli prisons outside of the Occupied Palestinian Territory in contravention of international law, representing a decrease, from 29 women, during the previous reporting period. However, reports indicate that Palestinian women continue to live in poor conditions in these prisons and face reintegration problems upon release owing to lack of social support.[5]

10. The reporting period saw an increase in gross domestic product (GDP) figures, lower inflation and better employment indicators. Yet, poverty and unemployment rates remained high, particularly in the Gaza Strip. The poverty level was 25.8 per cent in 2011, ranging from 17.8 per cent in the West Bank to 38.8 per cent in Gaza.[6] Palestinian women living in refugee camps tend to be the most vulnerable to poverty.[7] A report recently released by the United Nations country team concluded that the continued restrictions on imports to and exports from the Gaza Strip substantially impacted the prospects for economic development and growth.[8] An estimated 80 per cent of the population was dependent on humanitarian assistance.[9]

11. Some 1.3 million Palestinians were living in food insecurity in 2011. In a joint assessment on socioeconomic and food security in the West Bank and Gaza Strip carried out by FAO, UNRWA, WFP and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics,[10] the food insecurity levels among female-headed households in the West

[5] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

[6] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Levels of living and poverty in the Palestinian territory, 2011".

[7] Contribution of ESCWA to the present report.

[8] United Nations country team, "Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?" (Jerusalem, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), August 2012).

[9] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory, "Five years of blockade: the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip", fact sheet (June 2012).

[10] FAO, UNRWA, WFP and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Socio-economic and food security survey: West Bank and Gaza Strip, occupied Palestinian territory — 2011" (May 2012). Available from www.wfp.org/content/occupied-palestinian-territory-socio-economic-and-food-security-survey-may-2012 (accessed November 2012).

Bank were found to be 7 per cent higher than among male-headed households. In Gaza, 44 per cent of all households were food-insecure, compared with 17 per cent in the West Bank. Food insecurity levels among female-headed households in area C of the West Bank had reached 39 per cent.[11]

12. Available data show that women's unemployment rates during the second quarter of 2012 remained high, at 47.2 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 21.4 per cent in the West Bank. Women's participation rates in the labour force stood only at 14.9 per cent (compared with 65.9 per cent for males) in Gaza and at 18.6 per cent (compared with 71.5 per cent for males) in the West Bank. The majority of formally employed Palestinian women worked in part-time positions, in fields such as education and teaching, clerical work and services. Refugee women are more affected by unemployment than non-refugee women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.[12] Real public sector wages showed significant disparities between men and women, the average daily wages earned by women amounting to only 84 per cent of those earned by men in 2011.[13] The absence of a social security law has resulted in discrimination against women and workers with family responsibilities.[14] According to an ILO gender legal review, Palestinian society still perceives women's presence in the labour market as a threat to men's work opportunities, and as being more expensive to the employer than the presence of men, because of the perceived high costs of their employment owing to marital status and maternity leave.[15]

13. Women's health continued to be an area of concern, with women in vulnerable communities having limited access to essential health care. Restrictions on movement and on access continued to impede access to health care, more particularly for women in area C,[16] in the seam zone[17] and in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, according to the consolidated appeals process 2012, about 186 communities (approximately 151,000 women and girls) had limited access to essential health care, while 249 communities (279,000 women and girls) had no adequate access to emergency care. Micronutrient deficiencies remain a concern, with high levels of anaemia, as well as vitamin A and D deficiencies, recorded for girls, boys and pregnant women. Anaemia levels were at 57 per cent among children 9 to 12 months of age, and 26.8 per cent among pregnant women. An estimated 45 per cent of pregnant women in the Gaza Strip suffered from anaemia. Other prevalent disorders during pregnancy included hypertension, diabetes and

[11] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

[12] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Labour force survey: second quarter" (2012).

[13] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Performance of the Palestinian Economy, 2011".

[14] ILO, "Review of labour laws to promote women's labour force participation: a legal analysis and recommendations for promoting gender equality" (Geneva, 2011).

[15] ILO, MDG Achievement Fund, "Mainstreaming gender equality concerns in Palestinian cooperatives", policy brief No. 10.

[16] Area C is the portion of the West Bank under full Israeli civil and security control and covers over 60 per cent of the West Bank.

[17] The "seam zone" is the closed area between the Green Line and the separation barrier in which about 11,000 Palestinians currently reside. See United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory, "West Bank movement and access update" (September 2012).

psychological problems.[18] Estimates of maternal mortality have varied widely in the absence of a well-structured national monitoring system. In 2011, the Ministry of Health estimated that the maternal mortality rate was 29.9 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 26.3 per cent in the West Bank, and fertility rates were 4.9 for the Gaza Strip and 3.8 for the West Bank.[19] The main cause of morbidity among Palestinians is chronic non-communicable disorders, while diabetes had an incidence rate of 154.4 per 100,000 in the West Bank in 2011. Ministry of Health statistics for the West Bank show that breast cancer was the most common malignant disease for women (11.8 per cent).[20]

14. The situation in relation to water and sanitation remains critical, especially in Gaza, where 90 per cent of water from the aquifer is not safe for drinking without treatment. Availability of clean water is thus limited, with average consumption of 70-90 litres a day, below the global WHO standard of 100 litres per day.[21] According to UNICEF, about 83 per cent of the population in the Gaza Strip is dependent upon private water vendors for their supplies of drinking water. This water risks being polluted by the time it reaches the consumer, owing to an absence of regulation, and puts a financial strain on the most vulnerable families. In the West Bank, lack of adequate water has placed over 50,000 people in 151 communities in a vulnerable position. Eleven out of the 19 refugee camps in the West Bank have official sewerage networks that are connected to municipal main sewerage systems. The lack of sewerage systems in the remaining camps has affected Palestinian refugees negatively, and is linked with issues such as clean water and underground water contamination as well as water-borne diseases. As a result of the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation services, the health of women and children in particular is being adversely affected. In addition, water shortages and sanitation problems cause particularly acute problems for women, insofar as managing with low water supplies imposes heavier domestic work burdens and confronting a higher incidence of water-borne diseases among family members entails heavier care responsibilities; moreover, these problems produce additional strains on household income. UNICEF reports that inadequacies in water and sanitation facilities in schools have led to poor hygiene among children in a large number of government schools. Lack of adequate and separate toilets for boys and girls (in mixed schools) has affected learning achievements.[22]

15. Education indicators for enrolment showed significant progress. The net enrolment rate for basic education is 92 per cent, with more girls enrolled (95 per cent) than boys (90 per cent).[23] Female students constitute about 50.2 per cent of children enrolled, increasing from 49.4 per cent in basic education to 54.1 per cent in secondary education and to 57 per cent in higher education.[24] In the Gaza Strip, over 450,000 children, half of them girls, were attending schools during the 2010/11

[18] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

[19] Ministry of Health, "Annual report" (2011).

[20] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

[21] "Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?".

[22] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

[23] Ministry of Education, "Annual report" (2011).

[24] Ibid.

academic year.[25] Still, the education system is characterized by inequitable access and an overall decline in the quality of education. Access to basic education is affected by high school fees and the significant costs of transportation throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with many families in East Jerusalem having to send their children to private schools owing to limited space in public schools. In the West Bank, threat of harassment by Israeli settlers and Israeli security forces on the way to school, and fear of harm and humiliation at checkpoints, create stress and fear among children and their families.[26] According to UNICEF, in the Gaza Strip, over 5,000 girls began the 2011/12 school year attending classes in tents, caravans or tin shacks with minimal protection from the heat. The fuel shortage in the Gaza Strip, which intensified in February 2012, resulted in scheduled blackouts for 6-18 hours per day and random unscheduled cuts,[27] and has had an impact on the functioning of schools. With regard to the Gaza Strip, literacy rates were positive, with a 96 per cent literacy rate according to official figures (93 per cent for women and 98 per cent for men).[28] As noted during the last reporting period, advances in the educational levels of girls at secondary school and university levels are yet to be translated into gains in the labour market: women's unemployment rates remain significantly higher than men's among women with 13 or more years of education.[29]

16. While women have continued to participate in a range of roles in political life and hold various positions within the Palestinian political system and institutions, they remain underrepresented in decision-making bodies. Women constitute 21 per cent of the total number of current ministers (five ministers) and 6.3 per cent of deputy ministers. As of 2010, women constituted 13.2 per cent of the Palestinian Legislative Council and 18 per cent of local councils.[30] These results were linked to the implementation of a quota system in the Palestinian Legislative Council and local councils. In the justice sector, women account for 11 per cent of all judges, 5 per cent of prosecutors and 15 per cent of all lawyers.[31] There is one female governor for the West Bank (Ramallah). The Palestinian Authority employs about 88,500 staff, of whom 41.1 per cent are women, with 36.5 per cent of ministry staff being women. However, women tend to remain at the lower levels of decision-making.[32] According to UNRWA, in refugee camps, women also tend to be underrepresented at the level of camp governance. Women's organizations and coalitions continued to raise awareness and advocate on women's rights, on gender equality and on combating violence against women. However, movement restrictions and the divide between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, continue to contribute to difficulties in coordinating between the different groups.[33]

---

[25] "Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?".

[26] UNICEF, "My right to education", fact sheet (September 2012).

[27] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs occupied Palestinian territory, "The humanitarian impact of Gaza's electricity and fuel crisis" (March 2012).

[28] "Gaza in 2020, a liveable place?".

[29] Contribution of ESCWA to the present report.

[30] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

[31] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Women and Men in Palestine: issues and statistics, 2010" (2010).

[32] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Women and Men in Palestine: issues and statistics, 2011" (December 2011).

[33] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

17. The Occupied Palestinian Territory continues to be characterized by differing legal frameworks and a weak rule of law. The existing legal frameworks in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip contain laws that are outdated and discriminate against women, particularly in matters of divorce, custody of children, inheritance and violence against women. Little progress in legal reform was observed during the reporting period, as the Palestinian Legislative Council has not been convened since 2007. A UNDP study in the West Bank shows that women face significant challenges to accessing justice, including a lack of legal literacy, a lack of legal assistance, and the insensitivity of justice and security institutions to their needs.[34]

18. A 2011 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics survey throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip found that approximately 37 per cent of married Palestinian women had experienced physical or sexual violence by their husbands in the past 12 months.[35] Of these, 58.6 per cent reported experiencing psychological violence, 55.1 per cent economic deprivation, 54.8 per cent forced social isolation, 23.5 per cent physical violence and 11.8 per cent sexual violence.[36] In response to this violence, 30.2 per cent sought refuge with family, while 65.3 per cent kept silent. Only 0.7 per cent of those women who had experienced violence sought refuge in shelters. With regard to children, 51 per cent of those surveyed reported having been exposed to violence inside the household by at least one member of the household. Of these, 69 per cent were exposed to psychological violence by their parents and 34.4 per cent to physical violence. According to police family protection unit annual records, the units had received more than 2,500 reports of family violence and handled a total of 1,755 complaints in 2011.[37]

19. The informal justice system continues to deal with matters traditionally considered private issues, even those that are considered crimes by the Penal Code, such as, inter alia, femicide, so-called honour crimes and violence against women and children. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, partner non-governmental organizations documented four cases of honour killings in the Gaza Strip during the reporting period, and eight cases in the West Bank since 1 January 2012. In 2011, the President signed a presidential decree that amended articles of the Penal Code by removing provisions for leniency with regard to murder in the name of so-called family honour. The presidential decree has still not been published in the official gazette and is therefore not effective.[38]

20. During the reporting period, the Palestinian Authority and civil society partners undertook a number of steps additional to those reported in the last reporting period to address violence against women. Following a rise in reported violent attacks against women in the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority announced the formation of a committee to study personal status laws to protect women. Police family protection units mandated to deal with cases of domestic

[34] UNDP, "Public perceptions of Palestinian justice and security institutions" (December 2011).

[35] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Violence survey in Palestinian communities" (December 2011).

[36] The survey sampled 5,811 households in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2011.

[37] UN-Women, "Policing for women's security and justice in the occupied Palestinian territory: A comprehensive background analysis, and recommendations for strengthening the Palestinian Civil Police and Family Protection Unit"(forthcoming in 2012).

[38] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

violence in the West Bank were further strengthened, and an additional unit was inaugurated in Jericho, bringing the total number in operation to eight.[39]

III. Assistance to Palestinian women

21. The present section provides information on efforts made by the United Nations system, in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, donors and civil society, to address the specific needs and priorities of women and girls. It contains updates on assistance provided in the following areas: education and training, health, economic empowerment and livelihoods, rule of law and violence against women, power and decision-making and institutional development. Many initiatives were implemented through the United Nations Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and the Joint Programme on Culture and Development, funded by the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F). The first seeks specifically to promote Palestinian women's social, economic and political empowerment and reduce gender-based violence by encouraging their political voice, increasing their opportunities to obtain decent and productive work, and improving their access to protection and justice.

A. Education and training

22. United Nations organizations continued to implement a range of initiatives to promote women's and girls' access to education and training. In the 2011/12 academic year, 30,657 girls were enrolled in elementary and preparatory education in UNRWA schools in the West Bank (58.2 per cent of students), and 104,983 girls in the Gaza Strip (48.2 per cent of students). In the West Bank, 48 female students benefited from UNRWA administered scholarships for universities and 1,074 female students benefited from technical and vocational training (22 technical specializations and 4 trade specializations), as well as career counselling. An estimated 64 per cent of the 2011 female student graduates (out of a total of 376) from UNRWA vocational training centres found work within one year. In the West Bank, ILO partnered with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and UNRWA in developing the technical and vocational training (TVET) module "Women gain employment skills in photography". Trained in entrepreneurial and technical skills, 17 women from the photography course graduated successfully. In the Gaza Strip, ILO, in partnership with the Islamic University of Gaza, initiated a project for skills development of women engineers in the construction sector in Gaza. This project was based on the "Construction skills deficit in Gaza" assessment which identified a gap between demand and supply, in addition to the fact that most women engineers in the construction sector were unemployed owing to social acceptance-related factors. Thirty-six women engineers successfully graduated and completed the on-the-job training placements. The Palestinian contractors union offered 10 women engineers a full-time paid job after the completion of the programme. The FAO "Junior farmer field and life schools project", implemented in 22 schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, provided training to 330 girls and 22 teachers in vocational agricultural skills.

[39] Contribution to the present report of the United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

23. UNICEF supported the rehabilitation of 23 schools, including the construction of 10 new classrooms. During the reporting period, more than 40,000 children (50 per cent of them girls) received learning materials, and protective access to learning was improved for 5,400 children (2,700 girls), including through provision of school vehicles. Opportunities for safe play and learning benefited 550 students (50 per cent of them girls) in East Jerusalem and 3,500 children (1,700 of them girls) in the Gaza Strip. After-school activities in adolescent-friendly services centres reached 6,514 adolescents (3,252 girls) in 56 such centres (15 in the Gaza Strip and 41 in the West Bank, including 10 in East Jerusalem), with active learning, recreational activities and life skills-based education, creative thinking, active research, social initiatives, forum theatre skills and peers education support. To promote access to quality education for all Palestinian children, nine United Nations organizations supported the Ministry of Education in developing an education package designed to improve capacities on early childhood development and promote inclusive and child-friendly education. Activities linked to the package have been piloted in 46 schools (32 in the West Bank and 14 in the Gaza Strip).

B. Health

24. United Nations entities continued to implement a range of initiatives to facilitate access to health care for women living in isolated and marginalized communities. Through six mobile health clinics, UNRWA provided outreach of primary preventive and curative health care to 58 communities that lack health services and have access difficulties, and where many women and children face a threat of violence or harassment because of the current security situation. In addition, UNRWA health centres in the West Bank treated over 20,000 female patients for diabetes and/or hypertension. UNFPA rehabilitated and equipped 6 maternity hospitals and 14 primary health-care centres in the Gaza Strip, carried out capacity development efforts targeting health-care providers in primary and secondary health-care settings, and conducted outreach to 40 isolated communities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, helping them to access key reproductive health services in isolated areas affected by the separation barrier, settlements and checkpoints. To improve access of women in vulnerable communities to an essential package of health services, UNICEF procured small-scale medical equipment for the functioning of mobile clinics in area C; supported essential-care outreach services to 28 Bedouin communities in the Jordan Valley; and procured essential drugs in the Gaza Strip.

25. UNRWA, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO continued to provide a range of services targeting maternal and child health. From September 2011 to July 2012, the UNRWA West Bank Health Department provided antenatal care to 12,699 women, postnatal care to 10,065 women and family planning services to about 24,611 clients in the West Bank. Some 15,970 women were also referred to hospitals and assisted with hospitalization. A total of 1,570 women were newly enrolled in pre-conception care and 320 men were involved in accompanying their wives to pre-conception care counselling and for family planning in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, during the reporting period, there were 10,332 new acceptors of family planning and 6,027 women who were accessing pre-conception care at UNRWA clinics. In the Gaza Strip, the number of pregnant women under antenatal care was 32,181, with 94 per cent participating in four or more antenatal care visits. Postnatal care was

provided to 36,330 women (100 per cent for all deliveries during the reporting period). UNFPA contributed to the development and implementation of behaviour-change communication campaigns and activities within Palestinian communities addressing reproductive health issues. As part of the humanitarian response in the Gaza Strip, practitioners from primary health-care centres were trained on providing safe delivery within the clinic or at the community level. UNICEF also trained 15 midwives on providing care to mothers and newborns. A total of 912 mothers and their newborns were visited at least once from January to May 2012 with 2.0 per cent of newborns and 2.2 per cent of mothers referred to health centres for additional examinations and care. UNICEF procured micronutrient supplements for the benefit of about 210,000 children and 110,000 women. UNICEF continued to support the implementation of the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative in nine hospitals (six in the West Bank and three in the Gaza Strip). UNICEF support to World Breastfeeding Week celebrations involved working closely with religious counsellors to enhance advocacy initiatives for young mothers. In addition, the community component of the programme targeted all mothers of childbearing age in the Gaza Strip. The programme upgraded skills of midwives and gynaecologists (more than 50 were sent for training in East Jerusalem), improved health information and supervision systems in maternity units and promoted safe childbirth practices in Gaza communities through health workers and women's organizations.

26. United Nations entities also continued to provide a range of psychosocial services. UNICEF provided direct psychosocial support to 12,512 children (at least 6,000 girls) and about 11,000 caregivers (91 per cent of them female) in the Gaza Strip. UNICEF support to the child protection networks continued with three additional networks established in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, 14 girls and 11 boys were referred by child protection networks for specialized services and case management; in the West Bank, 98 girls and 62 boys were referred. Psychosocial counselling was offered in 21 UNRWA health centres and 15 relief and social services offices across the Gaza Strip. During the reporting period, 6,407 women accessed counselling services, the majority in UNRWA health centres.

27. During the reporting period, UNICEF supported a range of initiatives with regard to water, sanitation and hygiene. This included the extension of water networks in underserved communities in the south West Bank, benefiting 300 families, and the installation of household water filters, allowing 300 vulnerable families in the Gaza Strip to access adequate water for drinking and domestic purposes. UNICEF is also working on improving household-level water storage capacity and safe sanitation facilities in area C of the West Bank and in the buffer zone[40] of the Gaza Strip. To minimize groundwater pollution and sewage flooding in Rafah, UNICEF supported wastewater network improvement, benefiting 1,161 women and girls with adequate sanitation. In addition, UNICEF continued to support the construction or rehabilitation of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in 68 schools (29 in the West Bank and 39 in Gaza), benefiting 48,896 students (22,117 girls) with access to safe and adequate water and sanitation. UNICEF also supported water tanking to 151 schools in Gaza for February-June 2012, thereby providing safe drinking water to 70,000 students (37,237 girls), at 0.7-1 litre per day per student.

[40] The buffer zone is the zone inside Palestinian territory along the northern and eastern border of the Gaza Strip with Israel, to which Israel restricts access, citing security concerns.

C. Economic empowerment and livelihoods

28. Microfinance support continued to be a source of short-term poverty alleviation in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, with women representing a high number of beneficiaries. From September 2011 to July 2012, the UNRWA Microfinance Department provided 3,439 loans (34 per cent of total loans), amounting to $3.5 million, to Palestinian refugee and non-refugee women in the West Bank. In parallel, 171 individual loans, amounting to a total of $102,600, were provided to poor and vulnerable Palestinian refugee women through the relief and social services programme community managed fund. In the Gaza Strip, the UNRWA Microfinance Department disbursed 3,567 loans valued at $5.7 million. Women received 1,325 loans (37 per cent of the total) and $1.48 million (26 per cent) in business and non-business loans to enhance entrepreneurship and access to credit.

29. UNRWA has continued to provide relief to special hardship cases, including providing grants to 18 income-generating projects across 15 community-based organizations in the refugee camps in the West Bank. This contributed to the employment of 42 women, training of 339 women and volunteer opportunities for 77 women. In the Gaza Strip, the programme has provided grants to 10 income-generating projects established at women's programme centres and community-based rehabilitation centres, employing 86 women in microenterprises such as sewing, food, embroidery and hairdressing. In the West Bank, the UNRWA humanitarian job creation programme offered short-term employment opportunities to 10,560 Palestinian refugee women (42 per cent of total beneficiaries). The humanitarian job creation programme provided a monthly cash-for-work subsidy of $420 to female beneficiaries, and procured and distributed tools, materials and equipment to 30 women's centres.

30. Since the start of the United Nations Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women three years ago, ILO and UNRWA have provided various forms of capacity-building and income-generating projects for women. ILO provided members of 43 women-only cooperatives with grants, training and technical assistance, and piloted a capacity-building programme focused on business management and marketing skills, targeting 300 Palestinian women microentrepreneurs across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. ILO also assisted in the formation of the National Women's Economic Council, with the mandate to formulate and adopt a conceptual policy framework through which to reinforce the economic participation of women, end discrimination and inequality, provide support to the Ministry of Labour and influence national policies so as to increase opportunities for women.

31. FAO, WFP and UN-Women continued interventions to enhance women's economic empowerment and food security. FAO provided agriculture inputs and training on food processing, marketing and bookkeeping to women associations in rural areas, benefiting 2,000 women-headed households in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 2011. WFP provided assistance through food distribution and voucher programmes, which reached 245,101 women. Female-headed households in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were targeted, receiving, in most cases, complementary interventions including cash assistance. During the reporting period, UN-Women supported 32 women's centres running canteens that became financially independent and provided meals for 22,572 children. The programme generated

employment opportunities for 110 women, many of whom were working for the first time in their lives.

32. Through the Gaza gender initiative, UNRWA implemented the young women leaders programme aiming to close the skills gap between the labour market and the educated labour force, through ensuring that young women graduates develop skills required by the labour market. During the reporting period, the programme reached 723 female graduates. As part of the same initiative, UNRWA ran an empowerment programme for female-headed households, offering targeted skills-building related to financial literacy, household management and microbusiness. Three hundred female heads of household benefited from the programme.

D. Rule of law and violence against women

33. United Nations entities continued to implement a range of initiatives designed to improve women's access to justice and enhance capacity to prevent and respond to violence against women. The UNDP Rule of Law programme supported about 10 organizations that provide legal aid to women by representing them in cases involving family law and other matters such as labour rights, gender-based violence and family reunification before the sharia courts, in both the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip. The programme supported 275 women with legal representation and provided legal advice to 1,519 women and psychosocial support services to 444 women. In addition, 5,710 women participated in legal awareness-raising workshops. Gender-related training was provided to 240 female lawyers and 110 female law students. In the Gaza Strip, 3,645 women received legal advice and psychosocial assistance through legal aid units and from psychosocial counsellors working in the women's programme centres supported by UNRWA. UN-Women supported the formation of a group of specialized lawyers, under the auspices of the Palestinian Bar Association, to provide legal aid and representation to women victims of violence. The development of a capacity development programme designed to train lawyers specializing in defending women victims of violence was supported as well. UN-Women also provided technical assistance to the Independent Commission for Human Rights in developing a database for monitoring women's access to justice.

34. UN-Women supported the Palestinian Civil Police in developing the first strategy and action plan, standard operating procedures, job descriptions and minimum standard guidelines for family protection units, as well as a capacity development programme for its staff. UN-Women also supported the development of a media campaign to inform the public of the Palestinian Authority's commitment to ending domestic violence and promoted strengthening of coordination between prosecutors and specialized police in dealing with cases of women victims of violence.

35. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Office for Project Services and UN-Women continued to implement initiatives in support of the strengthening of the management of the Palestinian penitentiary system and the rehabilitation of inmates in reform and rehabilitation centres administered by the Palestinian Authority. UN-Women supported the establishment and implementation of rehabilitation programmes for female inmates in these centres (with a monthly

range of 30 female inmates), providing them with legal aid and representation services.

36. During the reporting period, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime supported the implementation of a four-year project entitled "Forensic human resource and governance development assistance for the Palestinian Authority", which aims to ensure that sexual and family violence cases are investigated and prosecuted with the necessary sensitivity by law enforcement and the judiciary. It also aims to guarantee that there are sufficient numbers of knowledgeable, skilled and competent female specialist forensic physicians, doctors, nurses and forensic scientists for the anticipated enhanced capability in clinical forensic services as applied to crimes, sexual assault, child abuse and domestic violence.

37. A number of entities, including UN-Women, UNRWA, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNFPA, supported various activities aimed at raising awareness on violence against women. Advocacy and public education initiatives included festivals to combat violence against women in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a public event organized by women victims of violence to enable them to speak about their experiences and training for different stakeholders. Between December 2011 and June 2012, UNRWA delivered basic and specialized training for staff, community-based organizations and community representatives on identification, intervention and referral in respect of gender-based violence cases, violence against women, family protection and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.[41] The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights continued to engage in awareness-raising activities regarding women's rights, and to work closely with women's rights organizations to strengthen their capacity in utilizing international human rights procedures.

38. United Nations entities continued to support the development and expansion of services targeted at women survivors of violence. UN-Women continued to support the Mehwar Centre, the first multi-service centre in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which throughout the reporting period sheltered an average of 20 women on any given day and continued to provide a range of social and legal services, as well as to economically empower women and to reintegrate them in society. UN-Women, in collaboration with UNDP, also continued to support the Hayat multipurpose centre for the empowerment of women and families, in the Gaza Strip, at which 30 women benefited from psychological, social and legal services during the period. In the West Bank, UNRWA developed an internal referral mechanism for survivors of gender-based violence in nine refugee camps and is currently expanding the mechanism to an additional seven camps, one village and one city in the north of the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, the gender-based violence referral system, established to provide coordinated responses to gender-based violence across its service programmes in the health, social services and mental health sectors, was further expanded to include 18 one-stop centres. During the reporting period, 651 cases of gender-based violence were detected and referred through the new system, with the majority of victims and survivors having been subjected to physical violence and emotional abuse perpetrated by their husband. A comprehensive and confidential gender-based violence information management system was also designed and launched. Building on initiatives reported in the last

[41] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

reporting period, entities such as UN-Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO and ILO continued to support Palestinian institutions in building capacity to prevent and respond to violence against women, including through the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women (2011-2019) and efforts to improve data collection and analysis in this area.

E. Power and decision-making

39. During 2012, UNDP supported the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy designed to enhance the capacities of 40 young Palestinian women leaders across the Occupied Palestinian Territory and strengthen their networks. As a result, 85 per cent of the trainees participated as observers in monitoring the local elections held in October 2012. In addition, four participants ran for elections in the list of their political party. UN-Women, in partnership with the Women's Affairs Technical Committee, provided training and awareness-raising on women's political participation and leadership to over 1,300 women and men, including local council members and youth. Through this programme, two local councils revised their strategies and workplans to ensure that gender was mainstreamed and the reactivation of the national committee for women's political participation was achieved. The Women's Affairs Technical Committee reported that over 20 women had submitted applications for membership in the General Union of Palestinian Women.

F. Institutional development

40. As part of the Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, UNDP advanced gender awareness and expertise among civil servants working at the local governance units and at different community levels, undertaking capacity development interventions in partnership with Birzeit University. Some 370 public servants (38 per cent of them women) were equipped with the knowledge and tools needed to integrate gender in district development planning and gender-sensitive budgeting.

41. UNDP and UN-Women signed an agreement with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to establish a monitoring and evaluation unit and to conduct a capacity-building development plan for its staff. This unit complements other existing monitoring and evaluation units at the Ministry of Planning, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and other line institutions in respect of monitoring gender equality and the implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy.

42. UNDP seconded a gender expert to the Ministry of Justice, who assisted the Ministry in establishing a gender justice unit. The gender expert worked with the Ministry to develop a gender action plan based on relevant national strategies. The strengthening of this gender unit is currently being supported by the United Nations Office for Project Services at the technical and operational levels through the Sharaka project.

43. During the reporting period, a number of ministries made progress in mainstreaming gender in their policies, programmes and strategies. The Ministry of Agriculture amended its recruitment policy to ensure that 25 per cent of all newly

recruited staff at middle and senior management levels are women. The Ministry of Culture mainstreamed gender into the culture sector strategy and documented promising practices for integrating gender into achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Ministry of Education adopted the school canteens scheme as a national business model for women. The Ministry of the Interior/Palestinian civil police reform and rehabilitation centres recognized the right of women inmates to work during detention and approved economic empowerment opportunities for women inmates. In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs oversaw the Mehwar Centre and increased the quality and number of employment opportunities for women living in the shelter.

44. ILO supported the Palestinian Authority in establishing a national minimum wage to protect low-wage workers and help marginalized and vulnerable groups, provided technical assistance with respect to the review of labour and employment-related legislation, and undertook a gender legal review in collaboration with the National Women's Employment Committee. A range of amendments, primarily to the labour law of 2000, were proposed based on the review. ILO also provided technical assistance in the development of an integrated social security system, and continued to provide training and technical assistance on the conduct of gender audits to ministries and other institutions.

45. UNFPA assisted the Ministry of Health in developing a national programme for family planning services and the national reproductive health strategy for the years 2013-2016. UNFPA also assisted in the development of curricula focusing on gender-based violence-related issues, and conducted capacity-building initiatives focused on religious and community leaders. UNFPA supported the Ministry of Social Affairs in producing a life skills curriculum for the use of counsellors dealing with marginalized young girls and boys. WHO conducted training workshops for Ministry of Health staff to develop capacity to undertake analysis and address the differential impact of health policies on women and men.

46. UNESCO continued to support the Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Centre in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment through capacity-building, research, advocacy and documentation activities. The UNESCO capacity development programme helped various community-based and non-governmental and governmental organizations to run programmes, conduct research and analyse policies from a gender perspective, and communicate effectively in respect of the issues affecting the situation and status of Palestinian women. UNESCO also implemented a coaching programme for gender units in line ministries.

47. As in the previous reporting period, a number of initiatives were also undertaken to enhance gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system. UN-Women recently completed a gender review of the medium-term response plan 2011-2013[42] with the purpose of setting clear outcomes, outputs and indicators which would contribute to and measure progress in terms of gender equality. UN-Women also undertook pilot gender mainstreaming efforts with UNRWA and FAO. UN-Women engaged with FAO, in a full assessment of their operations and programmes, whose recommendations are now being applied by the FAO office. The

[42] The medium-term response plan of the United Nations country team is a strategic planning tool aimed at structuring the joint work of the United Nations organizations operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continued to implement a budget gender marker and directed efforts in particular towards integrating sex-disaggregated data and analysis in the 2012 consolidated appeals process.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

48. **The continued lack of progress in the peace process, growing tensions and an escalation in violence and related displacement during the reporting period are of great concern. Restrictive residency, planning and zoning, and movement policies, together with continued settlement expansion, and the closure of the Gaza Strip have created a challenging humanitarian situation impacting negatively on the lives of many Palestinian women and their families. While there has been progress on some development indicators, the volatility of the context renders progress fragile and prone to regression. High levels of unemployment, poverty and insecurity persist and many Palestinian women and girls still face significant obstacles in accessing basic services such as education, health, water and sanitation. Insecurity and poverty can exacerbate gender-based discrimination and abuse, and this has been experienced by Palestinian women in the form of elevated levels of violence in the public and private spheres, as well as discrimination in the workplace.**

49. **Operating in a volatile and complex environment, United Nations organizations continued to respond to such challenges and carried out extensive activities to address the needs of women and girls. There were notable achievements in policy and institutional development during 2011 and 2012. Initial steps to implement the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy for 2011-2013 and the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women (2011-2019) have been encouraging. The effective implementation of these strategies, however, requires sustained political commitment, technical support and financial resources. Over the reporting period, the Palestinian Authority continued to take steps to address violence against women, including through strengthening police family protection units, taking more institutional ownership of shelters, and announcing the formation of a committee to study personal status laws to protect women. It is critical to build on, support and expand such initiatives.**

50. **The United Nations Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and the Joint Programme on Culture and Development provided the opportunity for United Nations organizations and national and local partners to work in partnership and enhance national ownership mechanisms. It is highly recommended that the United Nations system build on the achievements of these Programmes and work towards the continued implementation of joint programmes in partnership with national and local partners.**

51. **Improving the situation of Palestinian women remains inextricably linked to efforts to achieve lasting peace and women's ability to participate in decision-making processes related to peace and security. Efforts to involve both Palestinian and Israeli women in a revitalized peace process need to be enhanced and supported in accordance with the spirit of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Mechanisms for enhancing accountability and**

monitoring progress in the implementation of that resolution and related commitments on women and peace and security should be established.

52. **In view of recent political changes in the region and Arab women's growing participation in political life and decision-making processes, it is important to continue to promote and support the right of Palestinian women to effective political participation and leadership. Special attention should be given to on-the-job coaching for women newly elected to office. Support for women at the various stages of electoral processes should be provided and strategic partnerships with significant stakeholders — political parties, the media, State institutions and the civil society — should be further developed.**

53. **It is critical to continue to collect and analyse sex- and age-disaggregated data on a range of issues impacting the lives of Palestinians and to ensure that this information is incorporated systematically in reports and briefings by the United Nations system to relevant intergovernmental bodies.**

United Nations E/CN.6/2013/7

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 December 2012

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-seventh session
4-15 March 2013
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives

Proposals for priority themes for future sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15, makes suggestions for the future priority themes of the Commission and provides information to facilitate the Commission's discussion of the possibility of conducting a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2015. In addition the report makes proposals for the Commission's consideration of the question of a review of its working methods.

12-64888 (E) 040113

Please recycle

I. Future priority themes of the Commission on the Status of Women

1. The Commission on the Status of Women plays a central role in monitoring, reviewing and appraising progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at all levels. The use of a multi-year programme of work with the selection of themes for the Commission's consideration over some three to five years enables Governments and other actors to undertake timely preparatory and effective follow-up processes that strengthen interaction among different stakeholders, facilitate the identification of gaps and challenges and determination of further actions and initiatives for accelerating progress. The Commission has regularly adjusted the format of its multi-year programme of work to respond to new opportunities and to help accelerate more effectively the implementation of the Platform for Action and subsequent policy commitments, including by reducing the number of priority themes considered at each session and by adding reviews of the implementation of agreed conclusions adopted on previously considered priority themes.

2. The Commission on the Status of Women has used multi-year programmes of work since 1987. Following the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/203, a multi-year programme of work was adopted for the period 1997-2000 which took up a cluster of the critical areas of concern from the Beijing Platform for Action at each session, in a focused and thematic approach (see Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/6). In 2001, the Commission developed a multi-year programme of work for the period 2002-2006, building on the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (see Assembly resolutions S-23/2, annex, and S-23/3, annex), and taking up two priority themes per session. At its fiftieth session, in 2006, the Commission, in response to General Assembly resolution 60/140, approved the multi-year programme of work for the period 2007-2009 (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9) that included consideration of one priority and one review theme per year. In its resolution 2009/15, the Council set out the priority and review themes for the period 2010-2014. In the same resolution, the Council also decided that, at its fifty-seventh session, in 2013, the Commission would decide on the priority themes for future sessions.

3. Accordingly, the Commission's themes for its fifty-eighth session in 2014 have already been determined, namely, "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls" as the priority theme; and "Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work" as the review theme (agreed conclusions from the fifty-fifth session). The fifty-ninth session of the Commission, in 2015, may be devoted to a comprehensive review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action (see paras. 13-21 below).

4. The selection of priority themes is of critical importance in enabling the Commission to make forward-looking contributions to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, in a manner that best responds to current trends and developments. During 2014 and 2015, a number of processes and events will provide opportunities to gain insights and identify trends and new findings that

should inform the Commission's selection of its future priority themes. These will emerge from the Commission's own work, in particular its consideration of progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls, as well as from the comprehensive review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Furthermore, in the second half of 2015, the General Assembly is expected to take significant decisions in regard to the post-2015 development framework, including in particular in regard to sustainable development goals and the relevant links and relationship to the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals.

5. Given its important role as a catalyst in support of gender mainstreaming, the priority themes the Commission selects for future sessions can be a channel for the Commission to contribute to the implementation of the post-2015 development framework from a gender perspective, especially since the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/148, called for the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women to feature prominently in discussions on the post-2015 development framework. They can be an opportunity for the Commission to engage with, and contribute to, follow-up and implementation processes and thus to achieving greater policy coherence, including at the country level.

6. For these reasons, the Commission, at its fifty-seventh session in 2013, may wish to decide on a priority theme for 2016 only, in order to provide ample time for all stakeholders, including Member States at the national level, to undertake the necessary preparations. At the same time, the Commission may wish to request the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, in 2016, proposals for future themes that take into consideration the findings of the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2015, as well as any opportunities to enhance gender perspectives within the post-2015 development framework.

7. Accordingly, the priority and review themes proposed for 2016 are, respectively: (a) "Women's economic empowerment and sustainable development"; and (b) "The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls" (which is also the 2013 priority theme).

8. In paragraph 3 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want" (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), States recognized the need to further mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their interlinkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions. In paragraph 13 of the outcome document, States also agreed that opportunities for people to influence their lives and future, participate in decision-making and voice their concerns are fundamental for sustainable development.

9. The proposal for the priority theme is based on a number of considerations. Women's economic empowerment is a prerequisite for sustainable development and the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals and any other goals that may be established as part of the post-2015 development framework. The transformational changes needed for sustainable development will require the empowerment and leadership of women who are key custodians and decision makers on the use of water, energy and other resources. In recognition of this, the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability noted that "Any serious shift

towards sustainable development requires gender equality" and recognized gender equality as one of the fundamentals of development (see A/66/700, para. 17 (f)).

10. Women's economic empowerment through equitable access to assets, decent employment, and services — land, water, technology, innovation and credit, banking and financial services — will strengthen their position and voice in decision-making processes about sustainable development at the community, national and global levels. The benefits of strengthened women's participation accrue not just for women, but also for men and children. These include gains in the economic stability of households and families, in the economy, in health and well-being, and in overall quality of life. The World Economic Forum reports that across 135 countries, greater gender equality correlates positively with per capita gross national product.[1]

11. The post-2015 development framework provides an opportunity to address the role of women's economic empowerment in sustainable development. However, achieving women's economic empowerment is not a "quick fix" and will require strategies that are tailored and suited to particular regions and contexts. It will take sound public policies, a holistic approach and long-term commitment from all development actors. Innovative approaches and partnerships are also needed.

12. By focusing on women's economic empowerment and sustainable development as its priority theme, the Commission would bring together issues cutting across several critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action, including women and poverty, women and the environment, women and the economy and women in power and decision-making. The outcome of the Commission would directly contribute to the follow-up process to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, as well as to the work of implementation of the post-2015 development framework.

II. Possibility of a review and appraisal of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2015

13. In 2013, the Commission is requested to discuss the possibility of conducting in 2015 a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15). In addition, in its resolution 67/148, the General Assembly encouraged Member States to consider the appropriate commemorative activities for the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in the context of Council resolution 2009/15.

14. Every five years since the Fourth World Conference on Women, a comprehensive review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has taken place at the global level. A comprehensive review of the Platform for Action on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of its adoption would therefore be in line with the current practice of the Commission.

[1] Ricardo Hausmann, Laura D. Tyson and Saadia Zahidi, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2012*, World Economic Forum, 2012, available from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2012.pdf.

15. In 2000, the five-year review took the form of a special session of the General Assembly (see General Assembly resolution 52/231). The Commission on the Status of Women served as the preparatory committee for the event.

16. The 10-year review in 2005 was conducted by the Commission in accordance with its multi-year programme of work (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/4) which included a review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and consideration of current challenges and forward-looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls. Based on resolution 48/5 of the Commission (see E/CN.6/2004/14, chap. I.C), the review was carried out through the expanded use of interactive dialogue, with broad-based participation of governmental delegations at the highest level of responsibility and expertise and of civil society and organizations within the United Nations system. The review emphasized the sharing of experiences and good practices in efforts to overcome the remaining challenges of implementation. The Declaration adopted by the Commission at its forty-ninth session on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Economic and Social Council decision 2005/232) was transmitted to the General Assembly and to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the review of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

17. The 15-year review in 2010 was initiated by the Economic and Social Council through a request to the Commission (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9). Based on a subsequent proposal by the Commission and a decision by the Council in 2009, the Commission conducted a 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The review also served as the Commission's contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15). Based on resolution 53/1 on preparations for the fifty-fourth session (see E/CN.6/2009/15, chap. I.C), the Bureau of the Commission held informal consultations with all member States and observer States of the Commission on the modalities of the review, and agreed on its format and outcome. The review emphasized the sharing of experiences and good practices, with a view to overcoming remaining obstacles and new challenges, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals (see resolution 53/1). The Declaration adopted by the Commission on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women was endorsed by the General Assembly (see Economic and Social Council decision 2010/232 and General Assembly resolution 65/191). A commemoration of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was held in the form of a commemorative meeting of the General Assembly during the fifty-fourth session of the Commission, on 2 March 2010.

18. Review and appraisal processes to mark the five-yearly anniversaries of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action have benefited considerably from the work consistently undertaken by the five regional commissions and their outputs. Plans are already being made in all regions to ensure comprehensive efforts at assessing progress and intensifying action towards full and effective implementation of the commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women. These include the development of a common questionnaire to solicit inputs from Member States in the course of 2013, and the subsequent preparation of

regional reports for presentation to regional intergovernmental meetings. While the dates for such meetings remain to be determined, several regional commissions anticipate that they will take place in 2014 (Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Europe and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific). In addition to the overall regional reports, other preparatory activities at the regional level may include the convening of expert group meetings and the preparation of background papers on selected topics.

19. As the secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) will lead preparatory work for a 20-year review, including substantive preparations and United Nations system-wide coordination and contributions. UN-Women will provide support to Member States at the national level, upon request, through its field offices and thus effectively further strengthen and enhance the integration of its normative support and operational functions. As was the case for the 10- and 15-year reviews, UN-Women would again coordinate and collaborate with the regional commissions in the development of a common questionnaire and use the inputs from Member States for the preparation of a global report on progress in implementation, for submission to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-ninth session, in 2015.

20. The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to consider undertaking a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session in 2015. In doing so, the Commission may wish to place a specific focus on new and emerging issues and how those impact the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Commission may wish to encourage strong national-level preparations, as well as a regional focus in the 20-year review and appraisal to ensure that the regional reviews and outcomes of the regional-level intergovernmental processes adequately feed into the global-level review.

21. The Commission may also wish to discuss commemorative activities for the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In that regard, the Commission may in particular wish to consider opportunities for exercising its catalytic role in gender mainstreaming towards ensuring that processes that will take place in 2015, including those pertaining to the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development framework, fully incorporate gender equality and the empowerment of women.

III. Methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

22. The methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women are governed by a number of resolutions of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission's own decisions, as well as by established practice. The Commission last revised its working methods in 2006, recognizing that the organization of its work should contribute to accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as called for in the Declaration adopted at the 10-year review and appraisal in 2005 (see Economic and Social Council decision 2005/232). In 2009,

following the review of the functioning of its revised methods of work, it was decided that the Commission should, from its fifty-fourth session onwards, maintain those working methods (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15). In the same resolution, the Council also decided that the Commission should continue to keep its working methods under review.

23. Under its current methods of work, the Commission considers one priority theme at each session, with a negotiated outcome in the form of agreed conclusions. It also holds a high-level round table on experiences, lessons learned and good practices related to the priority theme, including results with supporting data. Ways and means to accelerate the implementation of previous commitments with regard to the priority theme are addressed in two interactive expert panels. The general discussion on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly also has an enhanced emphasis on implementation in relation to the priority theme.

24. Also at each session, the Commission reviews the implementation of the agreed conclusions from a previous session, thus enhancing its monitoring role and strengthening accountability for action. The review takes place in the form of an interactive dialogue, with a moderator's summary of the discussion as the outcome.

25. The third thematic element of each session focuses on an emerging issue pertinent to gender equality and the empowerment of women, which is identified intersessionally by the Bureau of the Commission, in consultation with regional groups. The outcome of the consideration is in the form of a moderator's summary.

26. At the request of the Commission, a panel event is organized by UN-Women on the margins of each annual session, on the priority theme of the following session for Member States and other participants to engage in preliminary discussions on the theme.

27. In addition, the Commission regularly follows up on resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council, and provides inputs and contributions to the Council's work, as applicable. The Commission also considers communications on the status of women, and appoints a working group for this purpose.

28. Since 2006, the Commission has gained extensive experience and insights in the use of its methods of work, including the use of interactive panels and dialogues to examine progress as well as remaining gaps and challenges in implementation; ways for enhancing implementation through the use of reviews of previous agreements; the participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations in different aspects of the work of the Commission; and the use of different formats for its outcomes, including agreed conclusions, resolutions and moderator's summaries. These experiences and insights could be harnessed to further enhance the impact of the work of the Commission and its role as a primary intergovernmental body for the promotion of gender equality. Further refinements to the Commission's working methods could also provide a stronger basis for the Commission to provide coherent support to the Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of all major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2012/30).

29. In order to support the Commission in a further review of its working methods, the Commission may wish to request the Secretary-General to submit a report to its fifty-eighth session, including ways and means for further enhancing the impact of the work of the Commission.

United Nations A/HRC/23/17–E/CN.6/2013/8

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
11 December 2012

Original: English

General Assembly
Human Rights Council
Twenty-third session
May-June 2013
Agenda item 2
Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary-General

Economic and Social Council
Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-seventh session
4-15 March 2013
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters

Report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council the report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, which was prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 50/166.

* E/CN.6/2013/1.

12-64357 (E) 090113

Please recycle

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women was established in 1996, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/166, and is an important benchmark in the commitment of Member States to implement the legal and policy promises to end violence against women. Administered by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), on behalf of the United Nations system, the Trust Fund brings synergy and coherence to the work of the United Nations in this critical field. It is a vital platform for realizing the "Delivering as One" initiative. The Trust Fund is the only global multilateral grant-making mechanism specifically dedicated to addressing violence against women, irrespective of the type or context of this gross human rights violation. Guided by its strategy document for 2010-2015, "Vision 2015", the Trust Fund supports national and local governments, non-governmental organizations and United Nations country teams in their programmes aimed at preventing violence, expanding services to survivors and strengthening institutional responses to address the causes and consequences of violence against women and girls.

2. By the end of 2012, the $63.5 million active grant portfolio of the Trust Fund included 95 programmes covering 85 countries and territories, touching the lives of over 24 million women and girls and influencing over 5,000 formal and informal institutions. The present report, prepared for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the twenty-third session of the Human Rights Council, describes the progress and achievements of the Trust Fund in 2012.

II. Background and context

3. Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. In some countries, up to 7 out of 10 women experience physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.[1] Women and girls in communities and countries across the world continue to live in a state of systematic insecurity that transcends geography, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status and religion. This violence and insecurity is exacerbated by the cumulative and intersecting discrimination and exclusion experienced by various groups of women and girls. Today, violence against women is increasingly recognized as a threat to democracy, a barrier to lasting peace, a burden on national economies and an appalling human rights violation.[2]

4. The recognition that violence against women is a major social and political problem is evident in the record number of countries adopting or strengthening

[1] See World Health Organization (WHO), *Multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women*, Geneva, 2005. The study found that the prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by a partner varied from 15 per cent in urban Japan to 71 per cent in rural Ethiopia, with most areas being in the 30-60 per cent range. See also "Violence against women prevalence data: surveys by country", compiled by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), 2011.

[2] See UN-Women, "United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, Annual Report 2011".

laws, policies and action plans to address this violence.[3] The reinforcement of these laws at the international level through successive resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council[4] calling for intensified action in this field is a further testament to the progress made so far towards a global legal framework in the area of violence against women.

5. Through the mandate conferred by the General Assembly, the Trust Fund invests in collaborative, coordinated and innovative programmes that aim to end violence against women and enable women and girls to be safe and able to live dignified lives, free from fear and with access to justice as the norm, not the exception.

6. Consistent with this mandate, the Trust Fund focuses on translating the global promise to end violence against women into practice by supporting initiatives that address the gender-based discrimination and exclusion that allows violence to flourish. The programmes implement strategies to transform unjust laws, inequitable social norms and harmful practices; to provide a high quality of services and access to justice to survivors of violence; to keep women and girls safe in conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings; and to break the link between violence and HIV/AIDS.

7. Knowledge, lessons learned and good practices generated through funded programmes are fast becoming the foundations and drivers of policy change in the dynamic process of addressing violence against women. Evidence gathered through baseline studies, evaluations and research conducted by grantees is being transformed into instruments for public education, policy advocacy with institutions and programming. The funded initiatives play a key role in increasing knowledge, transforming behaviour and modifying practices based on prejudice. The Trust Fund considers these valuable efforts to be the building blocks for preventing violence and promoting women's empowerment.

III. Translating promise into practice

8. Programmes supported by the Trust Fund combine multiple areas of interventions that seek to protect and fulfil women's interrelated rights. Efforts for the prevention of violence are implemented in conjunction with service delivery programmes, legal and judicial reform and institutional strengthening, thus forging a coherent and holistic approach to ending violence against women and girls, and addressing the manifold causes of violence and its complex consequences on multiple levels. These efforts are helping shape a model to prevent, respond to, and address violence, and to prioritize the sustainability and institutionalization of good practices. Together with its partners, the Trust Fund has learned through its work that ending violence against women requires sustained engagement with communities, that the use of multimedia and social marketing lead to increased awareness and visibility of violence, and that research based on solid evidence can improve advocacy, policymaking and programme implementation.

[3] Globally, 139 countries have included gender equality guarantees in their constitutions, with 125 countries specifically enacting laws criminalizing domestic violence. See UN-Women, "Progress of the World's Women: In Pursuit of Justice" (2011-2012), p. 24.

[4] General Assembly resolutions 61/143, 62/133, 63/155, 64/137, 65/187 and 67/144 and Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010).

9. The accomplishments of the Trust Fund grantees in 2012 make a compelling case for how much can be achieved by providing strategic and direct grants to programmes of high quality led by effective institutions. Through the programmes supported by the Trust Fund, grantees are building the foundation for an evidence-based, comprehensive model to prevent violence against women that can be scaled-up and replicated regionally, nationally and globally. The Trust Fund helps fill a critical gap in resources and increases the number of successful initiatives that have proven to be a factor in the reduction of violence against women and girls.

Preventing violence

10. Investing in primary prevention efforts at the individual, community, and societal levels to stop violence before it occurs remains a priority for the Trust Fund. This requires the identification of, and response to, the underlying causes of the problem, rather than focusing only on the consequences of violence. In addition, preventing violence entails interventions aimed at transforming unequal power relations based on gender, eliminating discriminatory social norms and confronting attitudes and behaviours that condone and normalize violence against women and girls, both in public and in private. To break the cycle of inequality, exclusion and marginalization that fuels violence, primary prevention focuses on changing the mind-sets and stereotypes that are at their roots. Primary prevention is a fundamental part of any long-term strategy that aims to eliminate violence against women and girls.

11. The Trust Fund has invested approximately $16 million of its active portfolio in community mobilization initiatives with the goal of bringing violence prevention efforts within reach of women and girls. By creating community support and zero tolerance for gender-based violence, these ongoing programmes are promoting changes at the individual level while increasing the protection of women at the community level.

12. The Trust Fund has also invested approximately $6 million on school-based prevention programmes that aim to create safe spaces for girls to continue their education. Engaging school administrators, girls, boys, parents and their communities, these interventions are recognized as an important component of any comprehensive strategy that will bring the intergenerational transmission of violence to a halt by tackling the norms that legitimize violence in society and the family.

13. The school-based prevention programmes supported by the Trust Fund provide girls and their support networks with the tools to realize their human rights and avoid potentially abusive situations. By engaging girls and boys, parents, school administrations and communities, the programmes directly target systematic gender discrimination and social norms that devalue girls, with the aim of changing personal behaviours and institutional and community rules that condone violence. In doing so, Trust Fund grantees are strengthening the role of girls and boys as agents and subjects of change in the achievement of gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and girls.

14. Responding to high levels of rural migration, the Beijing Cultural Development Centre for Rural Women is implementing a programme aimed at preventing violence against young girls left behind by their parents who have migrated to cities for work (girls being raised by relatives in their parents' absence), who are particularly

vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse. The centre is creating a community safety network for children by training guardians, teachers, police officers and medical professionals on how to better protect this group and identify the physical and mental trauma experienced by abused children who have been left behind. As a result of the programme, government departments cooperating in the pilot areas have increased their awareness of the importance of protecting left-behind girls and have shown interest in integrating components of the intervention into their routine work. For example, until 2012, local education policy in Suizhou City did not include safety and sex education in the education and training plan for teachers and students. Through the efforts of the centre, 1,675 local primary and junior high school students received critical sexual education and self-protection training, and sexuality and safety education was included in the annual training plan for teachers by the Suizhou Education Bureau for the first time. In addition, three resource centres were established in 2012 as safe spaces for guardians and left-behind children to share information and experiences, to learn and to help each other. The centre and its partners have taken the first crucial steps to establish measures for preventing violence against girls in the context of communities affected by migration. In doing so, the centre has demonstrated how a strategic, small-scale investment can have an important multiplier effect.

15. In Zambia, Equality Now is empowering adolescent girls to prevent, identify and report sexual violence through the creation of safe spaces for girls where they can build their protective assets. The programme has reached over 1,800 girls in four schools. Knowing that engaging boys is critical to any prevention effort, the programme reached 1,500 school-age boys with messages aimed at challenging stereotypes that condone sexual violence against girls, thus eroding the discriminatory attitudes and behaviours that have prevented them from becoming champions of girls' rights. The attitude change generated by the programme became evident through the commitment of over 600 boys in four schools to become agents of change to address sexual violence against girls, with an emphasis on becoming the next generation of partners in the fight against violence.

16. Recognizing the important role that men and boys can play in promoting zero tolerance of violence, the Trust Fund has invested approximately $6.3 million in programmes that specifically engage men and boys as agents of change.

17. Another grantee working to engage men and boys in preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality is the Brazilian organization Instituto Promundo. With support from the Trust Fund, the institute implemented a multi-country programme in Brazil, Chile, India and Rwanda, that ended in 2012. The programme sought to test and evaluate an array of interventions that engage young and adult men in the prevention of gender-based violence, including in the fields of sport, education, health and the workplace. The programme was subject to an impact evaluation in 2012 that demonstrated statistically significant changes both in attitudes towards violence against women and in the self-reported decrease in the use of violence against female partners. Qualitative results further affirmed decreased support for attitudes that encourage men's use of intimate partner violence. In India, the programme generated a decline in self-reported perpetration of intimate partner violence among participants. In Jaunpur, for example, there was a decrease of self-reported use of physical violence against women over the course of three months, from 19 per cent at the baseline to 9 per cent at the end-line survey. The evaluation also showed an increase in knowledge of laws pertaining to violence

against women. In Brazil, following the sport-based intervention with workshops, campaigns and tournaments, there was a significant decrease in the percentage of men that agreed that intimate partner violence was acceptable. Of the participants in the football tournament, half reported that they had learned how to interact with women differently and over 20 per cent said they had learned how to better control themselves when they had been tempted to act violently. In Chile, the health sector intervention showed a significant positive change in participants' self-reported behaviour, including an increase in condom use. The evaluation also showed a significant increase in gender-equitable behaviour by participants and over 80 per cent of the youth reported that the intervention had provided them with more tools to solve problems without resorting to violence.

18. In Cambodia, the Trust Fund grantee CARE and its local implementing partner, the People Health Development Association, have been highly successful in engaging young men in dialogue on sexual health and gender-based violence. In 2012, the programme scaled up its gender-based violence prevention initiative with male university students in 10 major universities in Phnom Penh, reaching over 6,500 young men. The initiative builds the ability of peer leaders to conduct peer education on gender, women's rights and responsible behaviour towards women in general, and pre- and post-training tests have affirmed the improved understanding and awareness of gender-based violence issues among trained university students. In 2012, the Executive Director of People Health Development Association was also appointed by the Secretary-General as a Youth Ambassador and member of the Network of Men Leaders in recognition of his role in engaging young men to address the issue of violence against women.

19. The Trust Fund is increasing investment in programmes using media to target discriminatory gender norms, attitudes and behaviours that place women and girls at an increased risk of violence. The Trust Fund grantee Puntos de Encuentro has been one of the pioneers in the area of so-called "edutainment" or education through entertainment. It developed the popular television series *Contracorriente*, which addresses key issues affecting young women in Nicaragua, such as commercial sexual exploitation, young female labour at factories and sexual abuse and its effects, through the day-to-day struggles of a working class family in Nicaragua. Puntos de Encuentro has further utilized the convening power of *Contracorriente* to spark discussions on sexual exploitation with over 1,500 young men and women, using selected episodes of the series. As a result, participants reported being able to identify risks of sexual exploitation and ways to prevent it. The grantee has also produced the popular magazine *La Boletina*, reaching out to more than 140,000 beneficiaries across the country, covering more than 84 per cent of the municipalities. *La Boletina* is disseminated through a network of more than 282 women's organizations, and has become a channel of cohesion, coordination and dialogue for the women's movement in the country. An evaluation in 2012 showed that readers of *La Boletina* reported having increased their understanding of the interconnectedness of their rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, economic rights and the right to a life free of violence. They also reported being able to make their rights respected to a larger extent, making decisions that affect their lives, establishing their own personal goals, ensuring political participation or organizing with other women to speak out. The Trust Fund is now scaling-up the strategy to prevent violence against women and girls in 11 countries, through the support of the "Pop Culture With a Purpose" programme implemented by Oxfam-

Novib. Puntos de Encuentro is one of the resource organizations in this programme, sharing and helping replicate its experiences throughout Asia and Africa.

Expanding access to support services for survivors

20. The Trust Fund supports coordinated, comprehensive and multisectoral approaches to ending violence against women. To ensure that the range of interrelated needs and rights of women survivors of violence are being addressed effectively, grantees engage with multiple sectors and institutions, including those related to health, security and/or police, legal matters, education, social affairs, youth affairs, labour and urban planning.

21. In Mozambique, in 2012, Pathfinder International, a grantee, established the first integrated centre in the country to care for and assist survivors of violence against women, bringing together health, psychosocial, law enforcement, paralegal and social services under one roof. The programme is strengthening the capacities of police and health providers in the Gaza province, contributing to the now fully functional directorates of assistance for women and children victims of violence in the police stations of Chokwè and Xai-Xai City. In these Cabinets, trained health providers receive and treat survivors, and refer them to appropriate services. The programme is also building the capacity of provincial and district directorates to plan, budget (e.g., training on gender-responsive budgeting), implement and monitor interventions to prevent violence against women. All partners and associates have been trained on gender and policies/laws related to the elimination of violence against women. These activities are the crucial building blocks for increasing ownership and sustainability of the strategies and interventions beyond the lifetime of the programme.

22. Moreover, the Trust Fund supports a number of pioneering initiatives aimed at strengthening service delivery for particularly vulnerable women and girls. As part of the $9.6 million allocated to the special thematic window[5] addressing the intersection of HIV/AIDS and violence against women, the recipients of grants from the Trust Fund are working to increase access for women and girls to critical services. The Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health is implementing a programme to improve the lives of women living with HIV and women and girls living on the streets, who are survivors of gender-based violence, by improving their access to care and support, and by building the systems, capacity and commitment of the Government to prevent and respond to violence. The initiative established first identification, referral and service provision system in Kiev for cases of violence against women and girls living with HIV/AIDS and living on the streets. The foundation is also piloting an innovative programme to engage over 400 perpetrators of violence in behavioural change counselling and education, in four cities throughout the country. In India, the Karnataka Health Promotion Trust is implementing a programme to address high levels of violence and increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS experienced by sex workers in the Southern Indian state of Karnataka, where nearly 135,000 women work in sex work, of whom 26 per cent report having been beaten or raped in the past year alone. By intervening at the individual, community and institutional levels, the programme is improving

[5] The Trust Fund launched a special funding window as part of its fifteenth call for proposals, focusing on programmes that address the twin pandemics of HIV/AIDS and violence against women.

knowledge, attitudes and behaviour among community members, sex workers and their partners, and service providers, on the intersection of HIV and violence against women. The programme has started yielding results and recognition by important stakeholders during its first year of implementation. In 2012, the judiciary in Karnataka decided to institutionalize the training across all districts through the judicial academy.

23. Conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings pose particular challenges to service delivery for survivors of violence. Across conflict-affected zones around the world, the organizations in partnership with the Trust Fund are working to meet those complex challenges so as to ensure that women receive the critical services they need. In Iraq, the International Medical Corps is building an integrated model of care for women survivors of violence by strengthening the capacity and coordination efforts of key service providers across multiple sectors of care in Baghdad and is establishing a referral system to respond to violence against women and girls. In partnership with the Ministry of Health, more than 100 medical staff from over 40 hospitals and primary health-care centres have been trained to provide better support and services to survivors. The knowledge gained by doctors, nurses, midwives, medical assistants and other medical staff is being integrated into the country's basic health-care system. The training of local authorities, the Iraqi Bar Association of lawyers, community social workers and non-governmental organizations promotes the cross-sectoral coordination needed to ensure a comprehensive approach for the provision of services to survivors. The non-governmental organization Resonance, based in the Republic of Moldova, is implementing a programme in the region of Transdniestria, aimed at preventing and combating domestic violence. The organization has developed techniques for integrated service delivery to women survivors of violence, including an effective system of referrals. Service providers have applied the programme's assistance model to their day-to-day work and have established a system of internal recording and reporting. The programme has been effective at reaching out to women, many of whom have become advocates and volunteers, passing on their first-hand experience, knowledge and skills to other survivors. The programme is increasing public participation in campaigns aimed at eliminating violence against women. In addition, the grantee was the driving force behind a draft domestic violence law that was intensively discussed, finalized and considered in the official agenda during parliamentary hearings in 2012. Overall, the Trust Fund has invested $7.5 million in interventions benefiting women and girls in conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings.

Strengthening the institutional response to violence

24. To ensure that policies and laws adopted around the world result in tangible changes for women and girls, the Trust Fund supports a range of initiatives aimed at strengthening the institutional response to violence. By expanding the quality and quantity of support available for the effective implementation of national laws and action plans, the Trust Fund promotes accountability, transparency and citizen participation and oversight.

25. The Trust Fund supports a number of initiatives that focus on strengthening the response of justice systems to human rights violations. In many countries, gaps in capacity and insufficient clarity regarding accountability, institutional mandates and responsibilities have led to justice systems in which impunity is the norm. By

setting up new criminal investigation guidelines and crime registration systems, grantees aim at creating institutional environments that can truly address women's needs. For example, a programme led by the International Rescue Committee is working to combat impunity and promote access to fair and timely justice in Sierra Leone. The Committee has provided financial and technical assistance to the police in Sierra Leone in the conceptualization and dissemination of the country's first standard operating procedures for the investigation of sexual and domestic violence offences. The procedures will improve the consistency and effectiveness of procedures for documenting, investigating and prosecuting sexual and domestic violence nationwide. The Committee was also an instrumental partner in the passing of the Sexual Offences Act by the national parliament of Sierra Leone. The Act provides a more consistent and comprehensive legal framework for the prosecution of a wide range of sexual crimes, including rape, sexual assault and sexual exploitation and is currently awaiting the signature of the President to be passed into law. It is anticipated that the law will create the legal framework for a more consistent and effective investigation and prosecution of sexual crimes, regardless of the victim's age or relationship to the perpetrator. Once the bill has been signed into law, the Committee will join other stakeholders in ensuring that the law is disseminated in Sierra Leone through a range of public education and training activities supported by the Trust Fund. The initiative builds on and scales up an earlier programme supported by the Trust Fund and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, demonstrating the importance of strong and sustained partnerships. The replication of the programme in other countries where the Committee is present is also being planned.

26. The Trust Fund supports several programmes aimed at establishing and/or strengthening referral mechanisms. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a United Nations country team programme implemented jointly by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in close collaboration with the Government, is building lines of communication and coordination between entities and both the local and State levels with the goal of establishing an effective referral mechanism for use by key stakeholders. The eight targeted municipalities have committed resources to ensure its sustainability. The programme has also contributed to the development and adoption of local plans and programmes on the prevention of gender-based violence by local authorities in 13 municipalities, which are provided with funding allocations through the national gender action plan. The target referral mechanisms have also developed and adopted their own plans for the prevention of violence in their local communities as a sign of long-term commitment to eliminating violence against women and girls.

27. Other grantees of the Trust Fund focus on strengthening the implementation of protection orders and criminal investigations of gender-motivated killings of women. In Mexico, Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir (Catholics for the Right to Free Choice) is establishing a standardized protocol for the criminal investigation of cases of murder and forced disappearance of women, which will serve as a model for state-level Attorneys General. In partnership with the National Citizens' Observatory on Femicide, the grantee has developed the first draft protocol for the criminal investigation of cases of femicide in Mexico City. The protocol will be replicated in other states in the country. By the end of 2012, 11 of the 17 Mexican States that had codified femicide had made use of the minimum guidelines for

investigation developed by the grantee. In response to the lack of, or inadequate, data on murders of women across the country, Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir has also identified eight minimum variables that should be reported when registering cases of femicide. These variables have been adopted by the Attorney General of Mexico City and will likely be replicated in other states and at the federal level.

IV. Generating knowledge and developing capacities

28. As the leading global fundraising mechanism dedicated to the elimination of violence against women and girls, the Trust Fund is an international hub of knowledge generation and dissemination. The knowledge generated through programmes supported by the Trust Fund provides a blueprint for what works to eliminate violence against women, but also highlights gaps in programming a· 1 funding that must be addressed.

29. What is increasingly becoming evident is that ending violence against women requires a comprehensive approach that includes prevention, assistance to survivors, a robust legal and policy framework and law enforcement capability. Without exception, programmes supported by the Trust Fund identify deep-seated stigma and discrimination against women and girls at the individual, community and institutional levels as the most important factors contributing to the vulnerability of women and girls. Analysis and evaluations of programmes supported by the Trust Fund are revealing that when it comes to the elimination of violence against women, strategies for change are the responsibility of all. The elimination of violence against women requires systematic and continuous reflection by individuals, communities and national and international institutions on beliefs, behaviours and practices and how these beliefs and practices may affect policies, programmes and actions.

30. The collective experiences of the programmes supported by the Trust Fund reveal that there are four common approaches that are critical to delineating a comprehensive response to ending violence against women. The analysis shows that 90 per cent of the grantees have put in place initiatives to strengthen the response to violence against women, to prevent the occurrence of violence and, where violence is perpetrated, to support survivors in the most effective way. Grantees of the Trust Fund have identified the need for multidimensional responses to ending violence against women, in the preventive, remedial and rehabilitation stages of the spectrum and have implemented this approach through one-stop centres, common protocols and the building of individual and institutional capacities to foster a unified response to violence against women. More than one third of the grantees have identified eradicating the root causes of violence against women as a core strategy and have used numerous interventions to change the beliefs, traditions, perceptions and behaviour of people. Among these interventions, those involving working with men and boys and with community, tribal and religious leaders are the most relevant, along with those promoting community-based research and awareness-raising through public information campaigns. A third approach is the production and enrichment of knowledge to support advocacy for social transformation, policy and action, with 41 per cent of the portfolio of active grants using this strategy mainly through (a) conducting surveys and baseline research; (b) mapping resources and services; (c) piloting programmes and drawing on knowledge from individual

and collective experiences; (d) conducting specialized research; and (e) building upon existing knowledge. The fourth core approach is the empowerment of survivors to enable them to move from a state of victimhood towards taking control of their lives and being agents of change for other survivors. Close to one fifth of grants have used such a strategy, creating support systems such as peer educators, counsellors and survivors' networks and programmes to provide women survivors with skills to reduce their vulnerability to violence. Specific interventions that have proven effective in promoting healing and transformation among survivors are related to the use of edutainment techniques and the creation of solidarity and support groups where women can have a voice to make their needs and priorities acknowledged and respected.

31. There is no single solution for ending violence against women, but rather various measures, models and approaches that can be applied in a coherent way. The impact of programmes is rarely immediate, as change is a slow process even in the best of circumstances. The lessons learned on best approaches for addressing violence against women accentuate the impact that the current funding environment can have on programming. While the importance of the multisectoral and multipartner approaches are increasingly highlighted through research and evaluations, the lack of long-term funding available in the field makes it challenging to carry out these recommendations and to push forward the lessons learned. Long-term investments in programmes that combine several strategies, bringing together multiple actors to address the many causes and consequences of violence against women and girls in a coherent manner, are crucial.

32. In 2012, the Trust Fund continued its support of global learning initiatives through its special thematic windows. In its sixteenth grant making cycle, the Trust Fund launched a special thematic window on addressing violence against women in conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings. The special thematic windows are particularly relevant for generating knowledge and stimulating actions in strategic areas to advance the field of ending violence against women and girls.

33. The Trust Fund special thematic window on addressing the twin pandemics of violence against women and HIV/AIDS also continues to scale up efforts for evidence-based programmes. In 2012, the Trust Fund produced a policy paper on effective approaches for addressing the intersection of violence against women and HIV/AIDS. The policy paper reinforced the message that investing in long-term interventions and challenging discrimination and harmful norms against women and girls is the way towards a future with zero violence and zero HIV/AIDS. The policy paper was presented at the International AIDS Conference, held in July 2012, in Washington, D.C., at a session co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN-Women.

34. In 2012, the Trust Fund intensified its efforts to develop the capacities of grantees to conduct effective monitoring and evaluation and to improve the overall processes of the Trust Fund for capturing and disseminating knowledge. The Trust Fund provided technical feedback to grantees, starting in the proposal development phase, and continued its assistance in developing and implementing grantees' monitoring and evaluation plans. It also extended its capacity development training for recently funded grantees on evidence-based programme design, monitoring and evaluation. The Trust Fund held a five-day capacity-building workshop in Mexico City, reaching a total of 14 organizations. The workshop was tailored for new

grantees to gain a global overview of evidence-informed best practices on programming. It brought the partners together to gain a fuller understanding of their programmes and to ascertain how their evidence-informed approaches can be strengthened.

V. Building new partnerships, ownership and expanded commitment

35. Mobilizing broad-based participation of both established and new actors in the field of eliminating violence against women is a key pillar of the strategic plan of the Trust Fund for 2010-2015. The Trust Fund is actively contributing to the United Nations "Delivering as one" initiative, by bringing the system together and ensuring coordination at the operational, decision-making and programme implementation stages. At the operational and programme management levels, the primary vehicle for the participation of the United Nations system comprises the 14 local inter-agency programme advisory committees and the Global Programme Advisory Committee of the Trust Fund. The Global Programme Advisory Committee advises the Trust Fund on strategic priorities and grant-making issues. The subregional inter-agency programme advisory committees ensure synergies with existing United Nations efforts towards the elimination of violence against women and national priorities. The decentralized and broadly participatory structure ensures that funding allocations conform to the capacities and needs of diverse countries and regions, thereby promoting the overall relevance of the Trust Fund to national priorities and contexts. In its grant-making cycle for 2012, the Trust Fund recorded the participation of 105 individuals and 17 organizations of the United Nations system[6] throughout the entire process, which illustrates the commitment of the entire United Nations system to the work and mission of the Trust Fund, and demonstrates the ability of the Fund to bring the system together in an open, transparent and participatory manner. Equally, it highlights the capacity to generate a platform for open discussion on strategies for the elimination of violence against women worldwide.

[6] In 2012, members of the programme advisory committees at the global and subregional levels included: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); the International Labour Organization (ILO); the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); the World Health Organization (WHO); the World Food Programme (WFP); the World Bank; United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict; and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Programme advisory committees also comprised of leading representatives of non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and other experts at the global and field levels, including representatives from the Centre for Women's Global Leadership, Equality Now, the Open Society Institute, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and others.

36. The Trust Fund is also supporting joint programmes off United Nations country teams, thereby contributing to the synergized, coordinated and collective efforts of the United Nations system, at the country level, for the elimination of violence against women. Since 2008, the Trust Fund has received joint programme proposals from 50 country teams, and is currently supporting 13 such joint programmes, with a total investment of $12.6 million in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Ecuador, Indonesia, Mexico, Nepal, Panama, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Uruguay. The targeted programme support of the Trust Fund is serving as an important incentive for agencies of at the country level to gather the collective knowledge and experiences of the United Nations system for systematic, coordinated and comprehensive programming. Joint programmes promote a multisectoral and holistic response to violence and are focused on supporting Governments in the establishment of systems and mechanisms.

37. The Trust Fund continues its close collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and its support to the mandates of the special procedures mechanisms established by the Human Rights Council. The country offices of OHCHR are working closely with the grantees to ensure the integration of a human rights perspective at every stage of programme implementation. The Trust Fund's annual call for proposals solicits proposals from organizations working to address gaps in the realization of recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. The Trust Fund has also engaged the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict during the development of the new special thematic window on violence against women and girls in conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings, to ensure that the proposals submitted address gaps in the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009). The collaboration will continue throughout the implementation of the programmes supported within this focus area. By funding these programmes, the Trust Fund is also supporting the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign by targeting one of its five key outcomes: addressing sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

38. In June 2012, the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, hosted a cultural event in the General Assembly hall with the aim of boosting support for the Trust Fund and celebrating the work of UN-Women. Through this event, the General Assembly reaffirmed its commitment to the cause of ending violence against women and the mandate of the Trust Fund to take action on behalf of the United Nations system. The increasing commitment and partnership was illustrated, subsequent to the special event, by first-time donor contributions from Africa, Latin America and Arab States.

VI. Grant-making cycle 2012

39. The Trust Fund's annual call for proposals solicits applications that focus on addressing all forms of violence against women. In ensuring that the core principles of an open, fair, transparent, competitive and merit-based process are maintained, the Trust Fund makes the call for proposals available in six languages and solicits applications in English, French and Spanish. The Trust Fund prioritizes applications that demonstrate multisectoral approaches and collaboration between various

stakeholders; evidence-based interventions; meaningful investments in monitoring and evaluation; and systems to document knowledge and lessons learned. It also underscores the potential for scaling up successful initiatives, while emphasizing the development of national capacities to foster sustainability.

40. The demand for grants from the Trust Fund has increased exponentially over the past five years. During its sixteenth grant-making cycle (2011-2012), the Trust Fund was able to meet less than 1 per cent of the total amount requested in grant applications (total requests amounted to $1.06 billion). In any given year, the Trust Fund has been able to meet less than 5 per cent of the demand for resources to address violence against women and girls.

41. In 2012, the Trust Fund awarded $8.4 million in new grants to 12 initiatives in 19 countries. Grants distributed in the sixteenth grant-making cycle are expected to reach over 1.9 million beneficiaries between 2012 and 2015. The largest number of grants distributed in 2012 went to Latin America and the Caribbean region, with Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and Central Asia and cross-regional programmes each receiving an equal number of grants, followed by the Arab States. In terms of the value of grant distribution, programmes from Latin America and the Caribbean were awarded the greatest amount of funds (23 per cent), followed closely by cross-regional programmes (20 per cent); Africa (18 per cent); Europe and Central Asia (15 per cent); and Asia-Pacific and the Arab States (12 per cent respectively). The vast majority of new grantees (75 per cent) are civil society organizations, followed by governmental organizations (17 per cent) and United Nations country teams (8 per cent).

42. The number of Member States contributing to the Trust Fund showed a significant increase from 24 in 2011 to 33 in 2012, reaching the largest number of contributing Member States since the establishment of the Trust Fund in 1996. Through its contributions, the Trust Fund serves as a barometer of the commitment of the international community to advancing efforts for the elimination of violence against women. These new partnerships represent a step towards the achievement of the goal set by the Secretary-General through the UNiTE campaign to raise, by 2015, $100 million annually for the Trust Fund grant-making cycle. For its sixteenth grant-making cycle, the Trust Fund benefited from the generous support of 17 Member States: Australia, Bahrain, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Morocco, the Netherlands, Oman, Pakistan, South Africa and Switzerland. In 2012, Johnson & Johnson was the leading private sector partner of the Trust Fund, while the United Nations Federal Credit Union made its second contribution to the Fund. From the non-profit sector, Zonta International has reaffirmed its commitment to the cause of the Trust Fund with its eighth consecutive contribution, while the United Nations Women for Peace initiative and the Universal Peace Federation made their first contributions to the Trust Fund in 2012. The work of the Fund was also supported by national committees for UN-Women in Austria, Finland, Iceland, Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Around the world, committed individuals have also embraced and supported the cause of the Trust Fund through their contributions.

43. Grants awarded in 2012 continue to support work along the thematic and priority areas identified by the Trust Fund, with some grantees partnering with and building on the achievements of past grants from the Trust Fund, and others

breaking new ground with novel approaches and learning in the field, as illustrated in the following examples:

(a) The organization Concern Worldwide will work to reduce school-related gender-based violence in the Nsanje district of Malawi by partnering with local non-governmental organizations and government agencies to establish effective awareness, prevention and response mechanisms and promote equal access to quality primary education for girls and at-risk children in 25 schools. In Papua New Guinea, Voice for Change, a local women's human rights organization, will support the local government in drafting by-laws for the newly established Jiwaka Province to address many forms of violence against women that remain widespread in the province;

(b) Five new grantees will focus on strengthening local and national laws, policies and action plans that address violence against women. In Peru, DEMUS will build on its record of successful advocacy for legislative change by seeking improved application of the new Peruvian Criminal Procedure Code for cases of sexual violence by strengthening the capacity of justice officials responsible for providing protection and reparation to women survivors. In Belize, the Women's Department will lead efforts towards the implementation of the country's National Plan of Action on Gender-based Violence, prioritizing primary prevention by addressing the causes of violence against women through specialized school curricula and the engagement of teachers as allies. The Women's Resource Centre in Armenia will promote the Government's accountability for the implementation of the 2011-2015 Strategic Action Plan to Combat Gender-based Violence through developing monitoring mechanisms and providing recommendations to relevant government agencies on legal and policy changes. The United Nations country team in Serbia will contribute to the establishment of a coordinated institutional response to address violence against women, in line with the National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women in the Family and in Intimate Partner Relationships 2011, through a set of prevention and protection measures. The Institute for the Advancement of Gender Equality in Cape Verde will spearhead implementation of the 2011 Gender-based Violence Law with a focus on the prevention of violence and the coordinated institutional response of the Government and non-governmental organizations;

(c) The Trust Fund is supporting four new programmes in conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings in 2012, awarding close to $3.5 million to these vital initiatives and providing grants for the first time to programmes in Libya. The International Medical Corps will work to ensure that gender-based violence is appropriately addressed and prioritized by local and national authorities during Libya's current transitional period. It will increase the service and coordination capacities of Government and community-based service providers and train people in five key facilities across the country on gender-based violence guiding principles and psychological first aid. The Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice will address the matter of accountability for gender-based crimes in the context of four armed conflict and post-conflict settings where the International Criminal Court is conducting ongoing investigations. The grantee will strengthen local capacity to undertake documentation programmes in order to generate credible data on gender-based crimes. The International Centre for Transitional Justice will work to ensure that transitional justice mechanisms are designed to address the specific needs of victims of gender-based violence in six programme countries, by providing

technical assistance and trainings to national policymakers and others involved in the design of transitional justice measures. In Thailand, the International Rescue Committee will scale up an already proven approach to service delivery for gender-based violence in humanitarian contexts, through a survivor-centred, multisectoral approach to address the needs of survivors in two refugee camps along the Thailand/Myanmar border, and by helping a local community-based organization to become the leader of this approach.

VII. The way forward

44. As the Trust Fund approaches its seventeenth year of grant-making, it will continue to offer a global platform to Member States, civil society organizations and the United Nations system for concerted efforts towards eliminating violence against women. Through its grants, the Trust Fund will continue to support high quality, evidence-based programmes that will improve the lives of women and girls around the world. It will continue to be a catalyst for new ideas, a source of support for strategic action and a hub of knowledge on emerging best practices in the field. Building on the knowledge generated by its grantees on the ground, the Trust Fund will continue to shed light on the necessary components of a global approach that enables a holistic response to end violence against women.

45. In order to meet the increasing demand for grants from the Trust Fund, efforts will be redoubled to ensure that necessary resources and attention are obtained. As of December 2012, the Governments of Australia, Austria, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Turkey and the United States of America have contributed to the seventeenth grant-making cycle of the Trust Fund, alongside formal pledges from the Governments of Germany and the Netherlands.

46. Closing the gap on the implementation of national laws, policies and action plans will continue to be the overarching framework of the Trust Fund's call for proposals. In particular, the Trust Fund will seek to support areas of work that remain underresourced and largely underserved by existing development programming. Given that exposure to violence at a young age has devastating and potentially lifelong physical and mental health consequences, the call for proposals launched in November 2012 included a special focus area on addressing violence against adolescent and young girls. This capitalizes on the first ever International Day of the Girl Child, which was celebrated on 11 October 2012, and will reinforce the commitment to respect, protect and realize the human rights of girls. This area of grant-making focuses on preventing and protecting adolescent and young girls from all forms of gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation, and ensuring that girls who experience violence receive critical services and access to justice. This includes addressing violence against those most at risk of violence, such as girls who are out of school, isolated by marriage, or "invisible" domestic workers. The funding window allows the Trust Fund to provide much needed resources and support to non-governmental organizations, Governments and United Nations country teams dedicated to advancing the rights of adolescent and young girls through integrated interventions that address and respond to their needs. By doing so, this new cohort of grantees will also be generating essential knowledge on best practices and identifying models that can be scaled up and replicated in other contexts. The Trust Fund envisions working closely in 2013 with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Coalition for Adolescent Girls and others to share information on

programming and expand the network of partners with extensive experience of working with adolescent and young girls.

47. The new group of grantees working in 10 conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings will be invited to share the experiences gained and lessons learned during the implementation of their programmes. At the end of the grant cycle, and based on the programme evaluations, the Trust Fund will disseminate knowledge and produce policy papers that outline good practices in addressing gender-based violence in conflict, post-conflict and transitional settings. Case studies will also be developed to identify promising practices in this area of gender-based violence programming. In terms of grantees working to address the intersection of violence against women and HIV/AIDS, the Trust Fund will continue to provide specialized technical assistance to partners.

48. Under the auspices of UN-Women as the administrator of the Trust Fund, the organizations of the United Nations and of civil society that form the Global Programme Advisory Committee of the Fund, including WHO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, the International Labour Organization (ILO), OHCHR, Equality Now, the Centre for Women's Global Leadership and the regional commissions, are closely collaborating in documenting the lessons learned from the programmes supported by the Trust Fund. This collaboration and coordination will continue in 2013 and beyond in an effort to ensure the integration of the elimination of violence against women as a core part of the development agenda beyond 2015 and as the critical enabler in achieving gender equality, advancing women's human rights and empowering entire communities.

United Nations E/CN.6/2013/9

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 December 2012

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-seventh session
4-15 March 2013
Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

Letter dated 29 November 2012 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women

The 2012 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, held in July 2012, considered ways to deal with the global jobs crisis, by focusing on the areas of unemployment, productive capacity, social protection floors, and development cooperation. By promoting consensus and facilitating discussions, the Council ensured a renewed focus on the link between the current jobs crisis and the ongoing need to strive for inclusive and sustainable development. The ministerial declaration of the high-level segment (see A/67/3, chap. III, para. 139) thus stressed the need for immediate collective action by the international community to address the global jobs crisis.

The Economic and Social Council also convened its biennial Development Cooperation Forum where participants proposed practical recommendations for meeting specific emerging challenges, as well as ways to further enhance development coherence.

The operational activities segment of the 2012 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council focused on the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the General Assembly, and nearly all programme countries requested that programming instruments be better streamlined and harmonized at the country level, while, at the same time, still maintaining sufficient levels of flexibility. It also called on the United Nations development system as a whole to greatly simplify and harmonize its business practices.

At the humanitarian affairs segment of the 2012 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, the Council succeeded in shining the spotlight on the world's most dire emergencies as well as in touching upon ways to improve its capacity to confront future crises swiftly. Moreover, it placed greater emphasis on integrating empiricism more tightly into humanitarian decision-making and partnerships, and discussed the Secretary-General's first report on the implementation

12-63694 (E) 171212

Please recycle

of integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan by the United Nations system (E/2012/76).

Finally, attention was given to the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the strengthening of the Council, including its working methods, so as to enable it to effectively fulfil its functions of giving special attention to the integrated and coordinated implementation of all major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields.

In addition to the ministerial declaration, a total of 33 resolutions and 44 decisions were adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session. A list of those resolutions that have relevance to the functional commissions has been prepared (see annex).

I would greatly appreciate it if this list could be brought to the attention of the Commission on the Status of Women for consideration and action (if necessary), and wish to thank you for your continued assistance and collaboration in this regard.

(*Signed*) Miloš **Koterec**

Annex

Resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2012 calling for action by relevant United Nations bodies

Resolution requesting follow-up by the Commission on the Status of Women

2012/25: Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

Resolutions calling for action by the functional commissions

2012/26: Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020

2012/27: Human settlements

2012/30: Role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, in the light of relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 61/16

Resolutions calling for action by all relevant United Nations bodies/entities of the United Nations system

E/HLS/2012/1: Ministerial declaration of the 2012 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council entitled "Promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals"

2012/2: The role of the United Nations system in implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education

2012/3: Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

2012/4: United Nations system-wide coherence on tobacco control

2012/5: Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

2012/8: Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

2012/9: Poverty eradication

2012/10: Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family

2012/11: Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda

2012/21: Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

2012/22: Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations

2012/24: Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

2012/26: Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020

2012/27: Human Settlements